



Eggplant (lat. *Solánum melongena*)

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Abstract. The article discusses the main properties of eggplant and its effect on the human body. A systematic review of modern specialized literature and relevant scientific data was carried out. The chemical composition and nutritional value of the product are indicated, the use of eggplant in various types of medicine and the effectiveness of its use in various diseases are considered. The potentially adverse effects of eggplant on the human body under certain medical conditions and diseases are analyzed separately. The scientific foundations of diets with its use are considered.

Keywords: eggplant, benefits, harm, beneficial properties, contraindications

Beneficial features

Table 1. Chemical composition of eggplant (according to [Food+](#)).

Main substances (g/100 g):	Fresh eggplant [1]	Canned Eggplant [2]	Boiled eggplant [3]
Water	92.30	86 , 90	89.67
Carbohydrates	5.88	9 , 77	8.73
Sugar	3.53	4.80	3.20
Alimentary fiber	3.0	2.5 _	2.5
Squirrels	0.98	0.90	0.83
Fats	0.18	0.70	0.23
Calories (kcal)	25	49	35
Minerals (mg/100 g):			
Potassium	229	12	123
Sodium	2	1674	one
Phosphorus	24	9	fifteen
Calcium	9	25	6
Magnesium	fourteen	6	eleven
Iron	0.23	0.77	0.25

Zinc	0.16	0.23	0.12
Vitamins (mg/100 g):			
Vitamin C	2.2	0.0	1.3
Vitamin PP	0.649	0.660	0.600
Vitamin B6	0.084	0.140	0.086
Vitamin B2	0.037	0.070	0.020
Vitamin B1	0.039	0.050	0.076
Vitamin A	0.007	0.015	0.011
Vitamin E	0.30	0.03	0.41

Complete chemical composition of eggplant and nutritional value

It should be noted that in the process of processing, the concentration of valuable potassium, which works to ensure the cardiovascular system and remove excess fluid from the body, drops especially noticeably. This makes eating raw (in salads) or stewed eggplant more preferable. During canning, some of the vitamins and minerals (phosphorus, magnesium) are also lost, but the indicators of other components can either increase or decrease.

Medicinal properties

Eggplant fruits show numerous medicinal properties. So, due to the abundance of indigestible fiber, which acts like a piston in the digestive system, cholesterol is effectively excreted from the body (it decreases in the blood by up to 40%, depending on the mode of use of the product). This, in turn, prevents the formation of new cholesterol plaques on the walls of blood vessels, thereby inhibiting the development of atherosclerosis and reducing the risk of coronary heart disease.

In addition, eating eggplant can:

- prevent the formation of stones in the gallbladder;
- alleviate the condition of patients with type 2 diabetes;
- relieve swelling and remove uric acid salts, which is especially important for those suffering from gout;
- stimulate the work of the gastrointestinal tract, relieving chronic constipation;
- restore salt and acid-base balance;
- stabilize hemoglobin in anemia.

The presence of vitamin PP (no acid) in eggplants can make it easier for smokers to quit the bad habit.

Recent breeding work has made it possible to develop almost black eggplant hybrids with a very high content of anthocyanins, capable of restoring body cells and preventing their damage.

Use in medicine

In the composition of medical preparations, at the moment, the most significant role is played by the compound *Solasodine obtained from eggplant. Rhamnosyl Glycosides*. It is included in Curaderm cream, which is prescribed as an adjuvant in the treatment of non-melanoma skin cancer. Medical journals describe the successful use of the cream in the treatment of basalioma (basal cell skin cancer) in the head and neck.

Although the beneficial properties of eggplant are still being studied in scientific official medicine, the pharmacological capabilities of a number of elements that make up the vegetable in large quantities are

already known. Thanks to them, the following areas of medical development can be considered the most promising.

- **The use of chlorogenic acid.** Eggplant contains various polyphenols, but chlorogenic acid in its antioxidant activity is 27 times ahead of the flavonoid naringenin. This acid has a beneficial effect on the cardiovascular system by reducing the sensitivity to low-density lipoprotein oxidation. It is able to prevent the development of diabetes, tuberculosis and even oncological diseases, showing an antitumor effect. In addition, it is able to protect liver cells, is active in resisting strains of staphylococcus and Escherichia coli. Some forms of acid are active against herpes pathogens.
- The use of potassium salts. Salts help to remove fluid from the body, creating a mild diuretic effect, prevent the development of coronary disease and improve the functioning of the entire cardiovascular system.

In folk medicine

Traditional medicine has learned to use the healing properties of eggplant faster than the official one. Various parts of the fetus are used (together or separately).

- **Pulp.** It is used in various versions for atherosclerosis (as a means of cleansing blood vessels from cholesterol deposits), for edema caused by disorders in the work of the heart, and also as a prevention of gout as an effective way to remove uric acid. Folk therapy widely uses eggplant to stimulate metabolic processes, bile secretion and peristalsis (wave-like contraction of the intestinal walls to move the contents of the cavum to the outlet).
- **Peel.** Dried and powdered eggplant peel is prescribed for diseases of the oral cavity (as a basis for rinsing) and with increased pressure. It is only necessary to take into account that in the classic bitter varieties of these vegetables, the greatest amount of poisonous solanine is concentrated in the peel, so you should be careful about self-medication in this way.
- **Juice.** In folk medicine, freshly squeezed eggplant juice is actively used, which, due to its antiseptic and antibacterial properties, fights eczema, external ulcers and skin lesions. They also treat wounds to prevent the spread of infection.

Usually eggplant juice is extracted by first rubbing the vegetable on a grater, and then passing the resulting slurry through a press (or simply squeezing the juice by hand). At the same time, to reduce the intensity of oxidative processes, if possible, plastic rather than metal graters are used. If there are none, you can finely chop the pulp with a ceramic knife, and then squeeze the juice out of this puree.

To normalize the work of the heart and improve the condition of blood vessels (by removing cholesterol formations), drink raw eggplant juice 1-2 teaspoons during meals for 10 days.

infusions

The choloretic infusion of eggplant by traditional healers is prepared as follows:

- A medium-sized vegetable is peeled.
- The pulp is cut into small cubes (about 2x2x2 cm or smaller) and poured with a glass of boiling water.
- Already scalded eggplant is aged for about half an hour in a water bath.
- The resulting mixture is filtered through gauze.

This infusion is taken 100 ml three times a day before meals.

An antiseptic mouthwash is prepared from the peel of a vegetable:

- The peel of the fruit is thinly cut and spread on a paper towel to remove moisture.
- The dried skin is ground into powder.
- The resulting powder is poured with boiling water and allowed to brew until cool.

Strained liquid is used to rinse the mouth when inflammation and sores appear.

in oriental medicine

In oriental medicine, the attitude towards eggplant is ambiguous. Tibetologist _ Chzhoma Dongzhi , in his book Improper Diet, states that excessive consumption of eggplant by people with poor health threatens the development of cancer. He also warns patients with tuberculosis against including eggplant in the diet, since this can provoke a hypersensitivity reaction against the background of drugs for tuberculosis.

According to the author, dishes with eggplant and crab will negatively affect the activity of the intestines and stomach. Those suffering from chronic diarrhea and other digestive problems should not eat them at all, and people with skin diseases should reduce their consumption of this vegetable.

At the same time, it is known that in traditional Tibetan medicine, recommendations for the use of certain products depend on the constitutional type of a person (there are seven such types in total). And if people of one type are really not advised to eat eggplant, then this vegetable can benefit people of another type. So, for example, for the type of "lung- trip" with a predominance of two life principles "wind-bile", a reduction in the diet of a number of products, including eggplant, is really required. And for the type "lung" with a predominance of the vital principle "wind", this vegetable is quite acceptable.

In general, Tibetan medicine uses eggplant for diseases of the Blood and Heat, including intestinal bleeding, ulcerative colitis, urinary retention. Eggplant is used in the treatment of skin itching, to heal microdamages in the mammary glands, and even to lower blood pressure.

In Chinese traditional medicine, which classifies foods according to the presence of Yin and Yang beginnings on a scale from "-3" to "+3", respectively, eggplant occupies the extreme position with a value of "-3", corresponding to the maximum concentration of the "Yin" beginning. Given that balanced foods are considered to be those that are close to neutral zero, eggplant should be used with great care and only with a particularly weak beginning of "Yin".

In therapy, eggplant, according to Chinese medical practice, is able to drown out the heat of the bladder, as well as regulate the fullness of the pericardium (Yang Fire). In the Eastern tradition, the pericardium includes the adrenal glands, which, by controlling metabolic processes, the circulatory system and water and electrolyte balance, are responsible for the balance of physical (sexual) and spiritual (sensual) satisfaction.

There are also known curious cases that occur in the absence of a critical eye in the application of some recipes of oriental medicine. So, recently in the news feed there was (confirmed by numerous photographs) a message about a Chinese man who, on the advice of a local healer, used an ancient eggplant therapy to cure constipation and abdominal pain. The patient thrust a whole 30 cm long vegetable into himself through the rectum, and he did it with such persistence that he damaged one lung. Eggplant after such treatment had to be removed surgically.

In scientific research

In recent years, the healing potential of eggplant has interested scientists around the world:

- Chinese researchers have extracted anthocyanins and some other derivatives from local vegetable varieties to evaluate their effect on human colon cells. As a result of comparing various anthocyanins, scientists came to the conclusion that all of them, to a greater or lesser extent, protect DNA from damage and have a pronounced antioxidant activity ^[4].
- Brazilian scientists experimentally tested the effect of eggplant juice on lipid levels and their state in plasma, as well as on the ability of the juice to remove “bad cholesterol”. In the described experiment, rabbits with artificially high cholesterol levels were given 10 ml of eggplant juice daily for 14 days. The researchers concluded that in experimental rabbits after such a diet, weight was qualitatively reduced, and cholesterol levels in plasma and aorta fell, and triglycerides, a high level of which increases the risk of developing cardiovascular diseases, also significantly decreased ^[5].
- American experts from the Center for Cardiovascular Research at the University of Connecticut were also interested in the ability of eggplant to eliminate dysfunction of the heart muscle and its lesions. Moreover, scientists compared the effectiveness of raw and grilled eggplant, introducing prepared vegetable-based products into the diet of laboratory animals for 30 days. Grilled fruits were tested on a par with raw ones to understand how seriously the chemical composition changes in terms of the effect of such an eggplant on heart function. Studies using an isolated perfusion heart model have shown that, regardless of the preparation method, eggplant retains potent cardioprotective compounds that have a pronounced protective ability. The concentration of some components (for example, antioxidant vitamins A, C, β -carotene) decreased after grilling, while others (for example, the antioxidant compound nasunin) increased. However, this did not create qualitative differences in the protective effect - in any form, eggplants turned out to be good for the heart. ^[6].
- The Food Biotechnology Laboratory of the University of Massachusetts investigated the ability of eggplant phenolic compounds to improve the condition of patients with hypertension and type 2 diabetes. Based on test-tube experiments, researchers have recommended an eggplant diet as a treatment for type 2 diabetes, finding that phenol-enriched eggplant extracts with moderate antioxidant activity are able to inhibit and block alpha-glucosidases, reduce associated high blood pressure, and as a result, improve the condition of patients ^[7].
- Australian scientists in 2011 presented extensive clinical trials of a then-new class of anticancer drugs based on eggplant-derived compounds (Solasodine Rhamnosyl Glycosides - SRG; they are BEC drugs). The agents used have shown high efficacy in intravenous and intraperitoneal administration, as well as when applied topically as part of a cream (Curaderm) in the treatment of non-melanoma skin cancer. The cream has been shown to be more effective than a number of other anti-cancer drugs, with impressive cosmetic results ^[8].

Weight regulation

A special role in the processes of losing weight with the help of eggplant is played by chlorogenic acid, which is found in even greater quantities in the peel of green coffee beans. The mechanism of action of chlorogenic acid, due to which subcutaneous fat is primarily consumed during physical exertion, is described as follows.

Once in the body, the substance binds glycogen (polysaccharide), which is formed by glucose residues and is considered its main form of storage. With an increase in physical activity, free glycogen begins to be consumed from reserves, providing the body with energy. But if the polysaccharide is retained by acid, then in the same situation the body is forced to turn to other sources of energy - to subcutaneous fat deposits.

The effectiveness of weight loss with the participation of chlorogenic acid is estimated at about 10%. At the same time, no extensive independent studies were conducted to test the operation of the described mechanism, and the sponsors of those experiments that are sometimes referred to on the Web are green coffee sellers who are materially interested in the results obtained. Thus, only new studies will be able to add up a complete picture of the dietary impact of acid on the body.

Fortunately, in the matter of weight loss, eggplant has another, already undeniable, advantage - in its raw form it contains very few calories (only 24-25 kcal / 100g), and although the baked version has twice as many calories, it's still comparatively few. Unfortunately, eggplant fried in oil increases the calorie content tenfold, ceasing to be a dietary product. To remove excess oil, fried vegetables are placed on a paper towel or steamed for 10-15 minutes, but the calorie content of such a dish is still high.

In cooking

On the European continent, people were able to recognize the culinary virtues of eggplant rather late - only in the 19th century, but since then, for two hundred years, various national cuisines have managed to include this vegetable in traditional dishes. The reason for this is the good compatibility of eggplant with cereals, meat, and other vegetables. Moreover, the vegetable does not just bring its taste to the dishes. It gives them volume and is involved in creating a shape, while maintaining a delicate texture, which other vegetables cannot.

Different peoples of the world have their own unique eggplant dishes:

- **Hit of the Caucasian summer - ajapsandal .**

It is based on eggplant, sweet and hot peppers, tomatoes, onions, garlic, herbs (dill, basil, cilantro, parsley) with the possible addition of potatoes. According to the recipe, fried onions, peeled tomatoes, peppers, garlic, herbs are gradually added to the pan. The dish is stewed for about 10 minutes, after which the stew is mixed with eggplant fried in sunflower oil and kept in the refrigerator for several hours . not to be at all, but in ajapsandal it is the basic ingredient. It is significant that eggplant is also often found in modern versions of ratatouille .

- **Oriental appetizer baba ganush (or baba ganuj) .**

Some call baba ganoush porridge, others call it pate, and still others call it sauce. But this appetizer fell in love with a lot of people, and in Israel (where the dish is more often called “ hatsilim salad ”) not a single large and festive feast can do without it.

To prepare baba ganush , the whole eggplant is placed on fire (usually on the grill, but you can even on the fire of a home gas stove or in the oven), so that the flame chars the peel on the outside. Then the fruit is cut lengthwise, and the tender flesh is scraped out so that the burnt peel does not get into the dish, but all the most delicious after such an extreme fire treatment is preserved. Next, the pulp is crushed into a homogeneous mass, spices, oil and, as a rule, sesame paste are added.

- **Turkish "boats", or Imam Bayaldi .**

From the Turkic language, the name of the dish is translated as "The Imam lost consciousness (fainted)". One of several popular versions attributes this to the excellent taste of stuffed eggplant. To prepare the “boats”, a deep longitudinal incision is made in the eggplant and through it all the seeds and 2/3 of the pulp are first selected, and then prepared rice, thick tomato filling, vegetables (onion, garlic, sweet pepper, dried or fresh tomato) are placed in it.), spices (nutmeg, coriander, lemon juice, sugar, salt, pepper), herbs. The set of products and the form of Imam Bayalda in different cooking options may differ. In the same Turkey, it is sometimes served, for example, in the form of a casserole (and in general, only in Turkey there are about 600 recipes with the inclusion of this vegetable). But the essence of Imam Bayalda

remains the same - eggplant absorbs the aromas and juices of all other ingredients, adding its own taste to them.

In addition to those listed above, there are other famous eggplant dishes in the world: Sicilian caponata, Moroccan zaaluk, Greek moussaka, etc.

Thanks to the writer Valentin Kataev, one Odessa tradition has become widely known - cutting eggplant with a wooden knife. Arriving from Odessa to Moscow, Kataev tried to cook homemade eggplant caviar "in Odessa style", but he failed to do this without a wooden knife, which was supposed to chop the baked pulp of the fruit.

It makes sense to use a wooden or ceramic (but not metal) knife when slicing eggplant. The antioxidants (polyphenols) contained in the vegetable, thanks to iron ions, are oxidized more easily and faster than simply by contact with oxygen. Therefore, if you cut the pulp with an iron knife or pass it through the metal screw of the meat grinder, it will darken (oxidize) more. The reaction rate is also affected by high-temperature exposure, which disrupts the structure of enzymes, which means that when whole eggplant is baked and then cut, it will darken less than if it is first cut and then baked.

In cosmetology

The cosmetological advantages of eggplant were appreciated both by manufacturers of mass cosmetics and appreciated by home care for the skin of the face and hands. South Korean companies especially liked eggplant extract, some of which promise that this ingredient in the mask will help rid the skin of keratinized plates, smooth the epidermis and narrow pores, others that it will even out skin tone and brighten it, and still others that it will prevent aging cells and activates self-protection mechanisms.

Approximately the same is expected from the eggplant and manufacturers of home cosmetics, hoping that the mask prepared from it:

- lightens age spots;
- smooth wrinkles and restore tone;
- moisturize the skin;
- cure acne breakouts.

Here are the recipes for several popular cosmetic formulations:

- **Mask for problem skin.** 10 g of grated eggplant are mixed with the same amount of clay and 15 drops of linseed oil. The composition is applied to the face in a dense layer for 15-20 minutes. This procedure eliminates sebaceous blockages of the mouth of the hair follicle, narrows the pores and stimulates microcirculation in the vessels.
- **Mask for age spots and freckles.** 15 ml of eggplant juice squeezed using a press are mixed with grapefruit juice (in a ratio of 3/1), 10 g of oatmeal powder (flour), and a gram pinch of ginger. The composition is placed on pre-cleansed skin for 15 minutes, after which it is removed with damp cotton or sponge.
- **Toning mask.** 15 ml of squeezed eggplant juice are mixed with 10 g of honey and one tablet of ascorbic acid crushed into powder. As in previous procedures, the composition is applied to cleansed skin for about a quarter of an hour.

From the above examples, it can be seen that although eggplant is considered the main component in recipes, auxiliary components give the target orientation in the use of a cosmetic product. To cleanse the skin, add sea salt (5 g) and activated charcoal (tablet) to eggplant juice, soda (5 g) and lemon juice (5 ml) for bleaching, cottage cheese (10 g) and cream (15 ml) for moisturizing.

Dangerous properties of eggplant and contraindications

Like other nightshades (potatoes, tomatoes, etc.), eggplant, among other organic compounds, contains solanine, a poisonous glycoside (alkaloid), which is produced by various parts of the plant for protective purposes, acting as a fungicide and insecticide. The Latin name for eggplant is *Solanum melongena* - indirectly indicates a significant amount of poisonous alkaloid in this vegetable crop, which gives it a bitter taste. However, unlike, for example, tomatoes, in which the poisonous compound accumulates in green, unripe fruits, solanine in eggplant reaches its maximum concentration when ripe. Moreover, berries of dark varieties are collected mainly in the skin.

Solanine is toxic even in small doses. First, it causes some excitation of the nervous system, after which it is oppressed. In parallel, the decomposition of erythrocytes occurs. Poisoning manifests itself in the form of nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea and vomiting. Headaches, disorientation in space may occur. Patients have dilated pupils. In severe cases, it can lead to convulsions and coma.

Of course, for serious eggplant poisoning, you need to eat a lot of overripe raw fruits of dark varieties. However, in order not to experiment on yourself, you can simply take a number of preventive measures:

- Harvest fruits in the "technical maturity" stage, without waiting for them to accumulate a poisonous compound.
- Get rid of especially toxic skins in old dark varieties.
- Buy modern hybrids, riddled by breeders from high concentrations of solanine, and, therefore, from the characteristic bitterness.
- Carry out pre-treatment of the pulp (for example, soaking in brackish water).
- Thermally process the product, which will largely remove the alkaloid from it (although it will also "save" the dish from some useful substances).

The most progressive way is scientific. Breeders, breeding new modern hybrids, rid eggplant of conditionally poisonous solanine, so that fruits with light flesh can be eaten even without soaking and raw.

However, in addition to solanine, eggplant also contains oxalic acid, which contributes to the formation of oxalate kidney stones, which is dangerous for people with urolithiasis. This is considered the most serious contraindication.

In addition, the consumption of eggplant should be limited to people with gastrointestinal problems (gastritis, ulcers, disorders), as well as insulin-dependent patients in whom eggplant in the diet can cause a pathological decrease in glucose concentration.

Selection and storage

The choice of quality eggplants is carried out, focusing on external signs. The fruit should have a smooth skin without cuts, dents, mold marks and dark rotten spots. At the same time, the list of buyer's tasks includes the acquisition of not only intact, but also slightly unripe fruits (which are at the stage of technical maturity). To do this, assess the condition of the stalk, which in overripe vegetables will look stale and brown. The young fruit should feel firm to the touch. If the seller shows his product "in a section", then you can also estimate the number of seeds (old eggplants have a lot of them).

To assess the concentration of solanine in a variety, they are usually guided by the color of the pulp. The greener it is, the more poisonous compound in the variety and, accordingly, bitterness, and the lighter (whiter) - the less. Without breaking the fruit, the color of the pulp inside can be determined by

the color of the speck on the “crown” of the eggplant. "White spot" indicates that the flesh inside the eggplant is the same.

Eggplants are stored at room temperature for about 2-3 days. But for longer storage, you need to move them to the refrigerator. Eggplant can lie in the vegetable compartment for about 3-4 weeks. And with deep freezing - at least six months. Solanine-containing varieties are sometimes peeled and kept in salt water for several hours before being placed in the refrigerator.

Varieties and cultivation

Gardeners in our country have recently increasingly paid attention to exotic varieties of this vegetable crop. The oblong purple eggplant fruit we are used to is just one of the options in an extremely wide varietal variety. Thanks to breeding work, the fruits of different eggplant varieties differ from each other in many ways:

- **in size:** there are both tiny 30-gram berries and 2-kilogram giants;
- **by color:** eggplants are white, yellow, pink, red, green, black, striped;
- **in shape:** some resemble chicken eggs, others are balls and balls, and still others are more like pears.

In the review below, we have collected the top 5 multi-colored varieties, demonstrating how the fruits of the same plant species can differ from each other.

- **"White Egg".** In addition to the fact that the fruits of this hybrid look like a chicken egg, they have a pronounced mushroom (champignon) taste with no bitterness, which is characteristic of many purple berries. Sometimes the tender flesh of white varieties is also compared with chicken meat. The most famous include "Iceberg", "Swan", "Pin-Pong", Bibo, "Pelican", with a recognizable saber-shaped fruit, etc.
- **"Thai green".** It represents a group of green eggplants, but even in this group, the hybrid stands out for its exotic shape (curved cylindrical fruits vaguely resemble unripe bananas) and surprisingly tender, sweet and fragrant pulp, which is appreciated by culinary experts all over the world. The “Yoga” light green hybrid looks like “Thai Green”, but in taste it is inferior to its Thai “relative”. Other varieties of green eggplants can be tear-shaped (as, for example, "Alenka"), and spherical ("Green Galaxy F1", "Green"), and flattened cylindrical ("Green F1").
- **"Golden Boy".** The fruits of the hybrid have a bright yellow color, and although they can be eaten when harvested during the period of technical maturity, yellow eggplant is more often grown as an ornamental plant. In particular, the height of the "Golden Boy" rarely exceeds half a meter, which makes it an excellent "windowsill culture".
- **"Red Ruffled".** Despite the "talking" name, this decorative hybrid, like the previous one, belongs to the group of yellow eggplants. Its reddish-orange skin acquires its characteristic color at the stage of incomplete ripening, when the fruit should be harvested. Ripe eggplants are bitter and contain many hard seeds. Due to its color, rounded shape with flattened "poles", ribbed fruit and size (3-4 cm in diameter), Red Ruffled looks like a tomato.
- **"Matrosik".** The name of the eggplant directly indicates its striping - the pink-lilac uneven color is located on the white background of the fruit. Despite this coloring, there is no bitter and poisonous solanine in this variety, thanks to which the Matrosik eggplant can be used raw in salads, and when cooking, you can not remove its thin skin.

Eggplant is a capricious crop to grow. She is thermophilic, photophilous, sensitive to transplantation and sudden temperature changes. Even at low positive temperatures, holding long enough, the plant dies. With the development of new hybrids, breeders have achieved greater resistance to temperature extremes, which greatly simplified the task of gardeners, farmers and gardeners.

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Eggplant - useful properties, composition and contraindications

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